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In the heat of it...

The seventh round of sixteen in the FIM Motocross World Championship had the lot in terms of a memorable competitive, passionate, high-level sporting event. Agueda in Portugal held up under poor weather, hosted some more exquisite action and was a friendly and well-organised affair as per usual. Sadly, the GP also had a slightly ugly side...

Photo by Ray Archer





PLAY

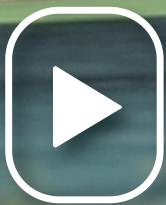


MOTOGP

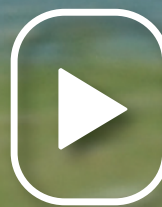
England expects and all that...

While the weather forecast is predictably grim for the Hertz British Grand Prix at Silverstone this week the country's most promising premier class racer from the last twenty years will enter the historic venue with his profile higher than ever. Patriotism will be firmly on the agenda with the UEFA European Championships in full swing...come on Cal

Photo by Milagro



PLAY



PLAY



AMA-MX

Orange glow...

Through the heat, haze and dust of High Point Ryan Dungey takes his second 1-1 scorecard in a week and can see another milestone in his career and for the KTM factory on the horizon. In a year where survival has been almost as important as speed Dungey's consistency and conservatism makes him one of the Austrian's best investments since they signed a certain Mr Cairoli

Photo by Hoppenworld.com





PLAY



TEST

Total Triumph...

Roland flew out to Jerez recently to spend some time with Triumph's new creation, the Speed Triple R. With the naked sport bike market now the area of choice for consumers, it seems the trend for high performing models of the sector is the new preoccupation for manufacturers. Flick through the mag to see what we thought

Photo by Barshon/Gosling/Barbanti





ONE MAN

ONE REASON

Perfect start for Ryan Dungey in the AMA Supercross & 450 Motocross class on the new KTM 450 SX-F Factory Edition.

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MX

GRAND PRIX OF PORTUGAL

AGUEDA • JUNE 10th • Rnd 7 of 16

MX1 winner: Clement Desalle, Suzuki

MX2 winner: Jeffrey Herlings, KTM





WAR-FAIR

By Adam Wheeler, all photos by Ray Archer

Herlings - who said on Saturday he will be an MX2-GP rider for 2013 and 2014 but will try some supercross next January - keeps ahead of Joel Roelants. It would be another Monster Energy Kawasaki that would shadow '84' later in the day



The Grand Prix of Portugal was wet and dry. The motos were processional and then stunning. Paddock relations had calmed and then flashed into fury again and all the while, as the soap operatic element of the FIM Motocross World Championship rolled on with spats, frayed tempers, near punch-ups and controversy, the premier MX1 class continues to shine like some pure beacon of how exciting, open, unpredictable and addictive motocross can be.

Jeffrey Herlings, MX2 championship leader and now winner of five events from seven, made headline news for another Jekyll-and-Hyde meeting of incredible riding and unfit behaviour.

The glare on the Dutchman – not even a ‘man’ by virtue of his seventeen years, something the many critics and reducing circle of supporters should at least remember – is now so intense that some bizarre acts are painting the pressurised teenager as some



kind of unhinged loose cannon armed with a factory Red Bull KTM. Herlings won the Grand Prix but his live TV rant directed at backmarker Mel Pocock (team-mate of Arnaud Tonus who the KTM man wronged the previous Sunday in France, apologised again to on Saturday and then confronted his family leading to an altercation in the living area on Sunday afternoon) cast him as the loser on the day.

His second race duel with Tommy Searle was something Grand Prix fans had been waiting for all season and while Pocock stuck to his lines and slowed under the blue flag instructions Herlings bobbled, lost the race and then entered into a mania of conspiracy theory. Pocock – making his fourth GP appearance and currently making big waves on the UK and European scenes – is a friend of Searle not only a team-mate of Tonus and perhaps one of the many who had a negative slant on

Searle gets by with a little help from his friends. The Brit claimed he would have been able to pass Herlings even before the fiery episode that ended the best MX2 race of the year. Searle can match Herlings but needs to start defeating his rival to think of the championship



Herlings after his French misdemeanours. Pocock was maybe not in a hurry to pull aside for the leaders but as Searle had pointed out, Glen Coldenhoff on the satellite Nestaan JM KTM machine also slowed the Kawasaki racer early in the moto. Pocock was running in his highest ever GP finishing position, seventh, which also showed the phenomenal speed and pace both Herlings and Searle were setting. Max Anstie, in third place and giving

Honda their first top three MX2 classification since 2009, was well over a minute adrift. "We were putting some hot laps in and I was enjoying the race," said Searle. "I was held up by Coldenhoff a lot. Sometimes you win from the backmarkers and sometimes you lose. I think I would have passed him [Herlings] anyway in the last two laps. There seems to be a lot of drama going on and it is quite funny but we are also trying to get a job done

A decent crowd of 18,000 braved a horrid forecast. The first motos were like this...the second ran in sunshine and across a drier and faster track



and it does make it a bit more complicated each weekend. Right now things don't seem to be going smoothly. I think when you keep on doing bad things to people then it is going to come around to bite you. You can't keep doing silly things and I think that is what is happening now."

Herlings, fined the maximum amount by the FIM for his TV rant, an unconfirmed total believed to be in the thousands, attended the

press conference.

"I don't think I have many enemies on the track...apart from Mel Pocock and Arnaud Tonus maybe. When the Two Lap board came out I lost two seconds in five corners. I don't know. I thought he [Pocock] might clean me out. Maybe it was a plan from Dixon [Steve, Yamaha Team Manager] for what happened with Tonus."

The Desalle of 2011 was in evidence at Portugal. Last year the Suzuki rider started the season with three wins in the first five races. This was his opener for 2012 and his campaign could really kick-on from here with a home event next on the schedule



You have to feel sorry for Rockstar Suzuki's Clement Desalle. Faultless winner of the first moto for his first chequered flag of the season and just six days after he had buried his grandfather, the Belgian ramped up expectation for his home Grand Prix in Bastogne this coming weekend by claimed Suzuki's

first overall triumph of the year and his third in a row across the elevations and bumps of the loose soil at Agueda. For several corners the MX1GP actually belonged to the equally impressive Cairoli who is operating at the top of his game. The Sicilian overtook the rapid Gautier Paulin on the last lap but couldn't



defend the advantage and his second position in the race gave Desalle the top step. "Maybe I am waiting too long to attack," he said. "I am sleeping a bit too much in the first part of the moto and I think we will change this tactic. Perhaps I could be more aggressive but Gautier was very strong and really fast today."

Onto Belgium next and then a small – and much needed – break for the Grand Prix series to recover a bit of perspective with regards to certain issues.

Cairoli lost by the narrowest of margins but '222' is operating at the height of his powers. There is still no better racer outside America and the clamour for the champion to try a National grows by the week



PLAY

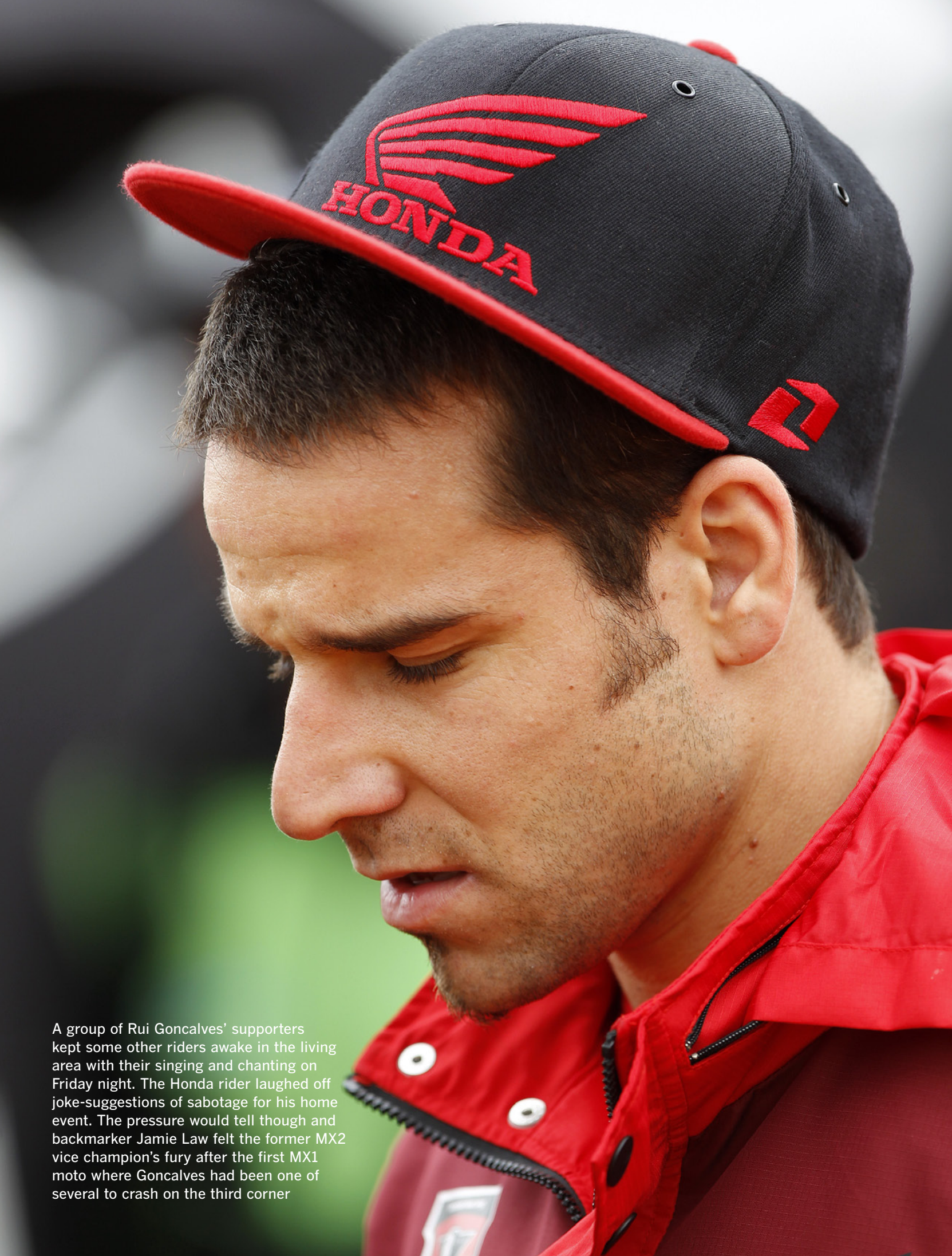




This melee at the start of the second MX2 moto caught Tonus, Roelants and Butron among others. '37', Valentin Teillet, broke his collarbone in the smash



Ken De Dycker cools off-cleans up. The Belgian has described the new factory 450SX-F as a fast-turning motorcycle. Ken is overdue his first podium in orange and needs a start to make it happen



A group of Rui Goncalves' supporters kept some other riders awake in the living area with their singing and chanting on Friday night. The Honda rider laughed off joke-suggestions of sabotage for his home event. The pressure would tell though and backmarker Jamie Law felt the former MX2 vice champion's fury after the first MX1 moto where Goncalves had been one of several to crash on the third corner

A shame that Mel Pocock's role in the second MX2 race drew attention away from the fact that the 19 year old scored his best GP result with 7th place.

In 2010 Pocock could barely score Grand Prix points. With British and European victories under his belt so far in 2012 he is rapidly becoming one of the young stars for a full-time FIM Motocross World Championship ride in 2013







Finally a good start and best finish of the season (6th in the first moto) for Jonathan Barragan. The Spaniard's career for the last three years has been like a train wreck. Pourcel (377) was again in the top three around the first turn at both times of asking while Cairoli almost tastes red mud



CLASSIFICATION & WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

MX1 OVERALL RESULT

Riders

1	Clement Desalle, BEL	Suzuki
2	Gautier Paulin, FRA	Kawasaki
3	Tony Cairoli, ITA	KTM
4	Christophe Pource, FRA	Kawasaki
5	Ken De Dycker, BEL	KTM

MX2 OVERALL RESULT

Riders

1	Jeffrey Herlings, NED	KTM
2	Tommy Searle, GBR	Kawasaki
3	Jeremy Van Horebeek, BEL	KTM
4	Max Anstie, GBR	Honda
5	Jake Nicholls, GBR	KTM

MX1 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS (AFTER 7 OF 16 ROUNDS)

Riders	Points
1 Tony Cairoli	295
2 Clement Desalle	258
3 Gautier Paulin	255
4 Christophe Pourcel	254
5 Ken De Dycker	211

MX2 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS (AFTER 7 OF 16 ROUNDS)

Riders	Points
1 Jeffrey Herlings	317
2 Tommy Searle	293
3 Jeremy Van Horebeek	268
4 Joel Roelants	204
5 Max Anstie	191

Paulin wins his second moto of the season and needed to be supreme to re-pas Cairoli on the last lap



HONDA GETTING IT RIGHT

Honda are certainly pulling out the stops with their revised priorities towards motocross. The factory Honda World Motocross team is not only an expensive prototype development project but also a viable beacon for the company's reenergised approach to racing. Riders Evgeny Bobryshev and Rui Goncalves are putting in the hours away from the track on the promotion trail. In between Grands Prix in Mexico and France both were whisked to the USA for photos and a test session with the new 2013 CRF450R and Bobryshev has balanced Grand Prix and team commitments with appearances in the Russian Championship as well as fulfilling his role as ambassador for the Russian Grand Prix on July 22nd at Semigorje. In the background the Honda Extreme Academy (helmed by former GP winner Brian Jorgensen) has been providing youngsters armed with the CRF150R with the chance to show their capabilities and receive coaching in a wide window of PR.

The grand prix team is now more heavily connected and in two days (June 14th) the Rus-

sian and Portuguese will use a free day before round eight at Bastogne to run a coaching session at Honda Park in Belgium.

With Dunlop actively involved – the crew are one of the official race set-ups for the tyre brand – the most striking thing about the Honda Park event is the co-ordination between major parties at the peak of the sport and the direct link with consumers. Although it is a more focussed and streamlined operation in comparison with others in the paddock there is no other manufacturer pulling all their promotional strengths together as Honda are currently doing.

Yamaha held their Master Class sessions with GP riders Philippaerts and Coppins in 2009 in France, Belgium and the UK and they proved popular.

In these hard times for the motorcycle market, extra initiatives like these direct with the client base gives the budget for racing and PR more resonance and Honda have to be applauded for finally exercising their muscles in the off-road world.



KTM IMPOSE HERLINGS FINE

KTM had their hand forced in several respects but issued a press release the day after event in Portugal stating they will impose a warning and fine on the much-maligned Jeffrey Herlings.

Motorsports Director Pit Beirer made the right public noises for the Austrian giants but the former racer also showed compassion and support for the rider who is contracted to be in Orange for the next two seasons at least. The German said: "While Jeffrey's behavior was unacceptable we do understand that he was under pressure at the time and we hope that this will be a valuable lesson for him and will help him in his future as a factory rider." Herlings apparently has asked for the penalization (his second in a week) to be given to a children's charity. A gesture or hefty olive branch of sorts needs to be extended to the Tonus family and a 'clear-the-air' with Monster Energy Yamaha and then perhaps some normality can be resumed.



CATCH AMA STARS IN EUROPE

2012 AMA SX Champion Ryan Villopoto is taking advantage of his forced 'vacation' due to the knee injury sustained at the Seattle Supercross to hop on a plane and visit Bastogne for the Grand Prix of Belgium this weekend.

The Monster Energy Kawasaki rider will be fulfilling promotional duties for Thor and the principal sponsor of his team at the inaugural event that will already see an alleged publicity stunt of the GP riders driving a parade of tanks on Friday afternoon. OTOH will grab some words from 'RV' as it will be especially interesting to hear his thoughts on the set-up, pace and appearance of Grand Prix racing

having only previously visited Europe for the Motocross of Nations (he is a four time winner of the annual tournament). Villopoto flies back home on Tuesday after the event.

The same day Ricky Carmichael will be enacting the second of two sessions of his Ricky Carmichael University at the sandy FatCat circuit in Doncaster, England.

The AMA legend's popular tuition-based riding school is only scheduled for one visit to Europe (Monday and Tuesday) so fans able to part with £500 and join one of the ability-based groups can contact rcueurope@rickycarmichael.com for more information. The Facebook page is [here](#).

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TENSIONS AND TEMPERERS

By Adam Wheeler



After the Grand Prix of France one of Britain's top riders at international level – Jake Nicholls @JakeNicholls45 - sent the following Tweet: 'Its awesome how much hate there is in the paddock ATM, its how it should be. Racers ain't supposed to be friends.'

It was a revealing comment on a sport and paddock that does have a high degree of camaraderie but reminded onlookers that there is also a hidden ruthless streak involved. The Herlings-Tonus incident (video here for those that still haven't seen) and Paulin-Pourcel spat added a splash of Tabasco to the series. The gamesmanship and the stupidity involved in the moments that caused insults to be thrown, the FIM to warn and a battle lines to be firmly drawn only weeks after the riders had stood together at the side of a race track on Saturday in Mexico were not particularly pleasant but it in some ways it made the sport even more riveting.

Any ideas that Tonus and Pourcel or Paulin might have had about blatant on-track retribution were pointless with the added attention on the riders in Portugal but this didn't mean any little 'rubs' or tactics to further off-set their opponent would be off the menu. On the contrary new depths were sunk and rifts widened to encompass the teams and not just the riders themselves. There was almost a mighty dust-up in the pitlane before the second MX2 moto had finished. MX1 was left to entertain while MX2 was able to shock.

Herlings commented that he'd had a 'hundred' hate messages, even some threatening to pelt him with stones. It seemed a bit over the top. He showed me a graphic where someone had gone to the trouble of designing a logo for his name over a Dutch flag and substituted the 'l' in his name for the shape of a penis.

At an early part of the weekend in Portugal there was a feeling that a line had been crossed...but then Herlings only opened a new gulf of reaction on Sunday. And was duly fined and sanctioned by KTM on Monday with the Austrians essentially backed into a corner.

Insults and rage only weeks after the riders had stood together in Mexico...

It is hard to think of too many instances of hate-filled duels through the last ten years. There have been clashes and promises of revenge served chilled, even contests of unpopularity by the likes of Ken De Dycker and Clement Desalle through their tough and often unwise riding tactics to unsettle rivals (brake checks, line cutting etc).

Perhaps the last instance of a proper relationship meltdown was between current MX1 title rivals Tony Cairoli and Chris Pourcel in 2007 when tussling in MX2. Allegations of line blocking out of the gate, the type of squabble now going on with Herlings and Tommy Searle, were prevalent and there was little love lost. Cairoli has also had his run-ins with Searle and David Philippaerts, but this must be one of the consequences of racing and growing up wearing the biggest target on your back. Now of course '222' is the model ambassador.

Misbehaviour with reference to safety must not be condoned at any price but as Nicholls suggests there is nothing wrong in dealing with racing as the uncompromising, selfish and highly competitive sport that it is.



MAJOR PLAYER

FIVE REASONS WHY ARNAUD TONUS'S SIGNATURE HAS BECOME ONE OF THE MOST PRIZED IN THE FIM MOTOCROSS GRAND PRIX PADDOCK...

By Adam Wheeler, all photos by Ray Archer

The Monster Energy Yamaha racer is one of Switzerland's few motorsports stars. Nearly twenty-one, in his fourth MX2 Grand Prix year, winner of the Ricky Carmichael award at the Motocross of Nations as a wide-eyed sixteen year old, reigning British Champion and exponent of one of the most eye-catching riding styles found this side of the Atlantic. Tonus' services have been keenly chased as he is already widely touted as one

of the favourites for what will be a new look 2013 MX2 title campaign. A broken wrist and dislocated shoulder pre-season caused him to miss five Grands Prix and discounted his credentials this year with the rapid Cosworth-powered Yamaha.

Circumstances have led Arnaud and his close family from KTM, to a factory Suzuki and into the arms of Yamaha in three years where his rising profile has hit new exciting heights.

1

WITH TOMMY SEARLE, JOEL ROELANTS AND JEREMY VAN HOREBEEK ALL LEAVING THE MX2 CATEGORY FOR 2013 TONUS, EVEN THOUGH ONE OF THE TALLEST ON THE 250s, WILL BE ONE OF THE MAIN CONTENDERS...

AT: You need the best bike in MX2 and I think we have that with Steve and Monster Energy Yamaha. Look at Tommy and Jeffrey, I don't think I am that far away from them in my stature. The 250 is quite small but racing it and getting the most out of it is all good experience for me. I take care of what I eat and I don't bulk up too much in terms of muscles because you don't need that on a 250. I want more experience of being at the front and being on top

because that hasn't happened for me yet. It feels great to be in demand but it is very unexpected because I've been injured. I guess some of it is to do with the age limit and people leaving the class. Yeah, I am up near the top but then there are other guys that have to move. Right now I just want to show what I am really able to do. Many people are talking about me but I feel that I haven't shown yet what I am capable of.



D

FEATURE



“If I have to battle aggressively on the track then I will do...”



2

HE'S A GOOD GUY AND AN AMIABLE TEAM-MATE...BUT TOO NICE TO WIN?

AT: Um...I don't think that you need to be bad to win. Maybe I am a bit too nice but I'm working on consistently having that speed to win, and with that the rest doesn't really matter. If I have to battle aggressively on the track then I will do. My personality is what it is and I really believe that if you are fast enough to win then you don't need to play dirty to do it.







3

**EDUCATION WITH THREE TEAMS AND ALONGSIDE TEAM-MATES
LIKE KEN ROCZEN AND ZACH OSBORNE**

AT: It has been tough to learn. I was always at the front when I was a junior in Switzerland or France and it was always my dream to come to the GPs. When I got here I was still in a dream world and not really knowing my potential. That first season in 2009 was a bit up and down but overall pretty good and then I went to the factory Suzuki team and at the time I couldn't really handle the pressure. I was really pumped but part of me didn't expect to be in that position so soon. I was so nervous it took me half of the year to get rid of some of the pressure and enjoy it. I learnt how to improve my fitness and worked well with Georges Jobe. My goal was to finish consistently in the top ten and I did that so we achieved some goals. I got a bit lost at the end of 2010 because my contract disappeared as the team's situation with the sponsor changed and it was a bit weird. Luckily Steve [Dixon, Monster Energy Yamaha Team Manager] called me and we fixed a deal together. We set ourselves the target of getting on the podium and it didn't really happen. My speed and condition were good but I made too many

mistakes. There are many things to handle at this level and it is so impressive to see people like Roczen and Herlings coming straight in and winning Grands Prix. Maybe I haven't grasped all the factors you need to win just yet but to finish fifth overall means I was still on the right track. We wanted those podiums and a go at the title this year but then that injury happened. It was hard to pick up some stuff from Kenny because everything that he does is so natural. It looks like he is coming to a race just to have fun. He didn't look like he had any pressure and that was something I tried to take onboard. I'd be next to him in the paddock or the gate and he'd be laughing and I'd be all tight and nervous and think 'fuck, how does he do that?!'. Zach has been a bit more to himself. I was pretty close with Kenny and he is a great friend but the same atmosphere is not there with Zach. I really like him and think he is a great guy but we are more on a similar level in the team and I guess that brings a different relationship. I've always enjoyed being with my team-mates and Shaun [Simpson] is another good person.





4

A DELECTABLE AND RAPID RIDING STYLE

AT: I think I've kept the same style since I was a kid. Of course I've grown up and gotten bigger so I had to change some stuff on the 250 to deal with that but it's pretty much the same. My bad point before was corner speed but I have been working on that. I'm pretty smooth and enjoy that way to ride. I like putting on a show for the fans and they are an important part of the sport. I love what I do and if I can demonstrate that then I'm happy.



5

A CLOSE AND DEDICATED FAMILY THAT FOLLOW HIM TO EVERY RACE

AT: The Tonus family has always been tight and they have been supporting me since I was so young. My grandfather was involved, my uncle was a champion and my dad raced in GPs. I think I need them to be here and to help me but perhaps in some ways they are too close. We share all our experiences together and they bring me so much love and support. If I was on top and winning GPs and they weren't here

it would be very strange. If I can bring them back something like glory then that would be fantastic. I'm with my dad every day and we train together. He sold his business to come with me. He is my dad but it feels like he is my friend, coach, trainer, whatever. He never kicks my ass but he can let me know when he thinks I'm on the wrong path. There is honesty there and nobody knows me better.



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AMA-MX

FMF HIGH POINT NATIONAL

Mt MORRIS • JUNE 9th • Rnd 4 of 12

450 winner: Ryan Dungey, KTM

250 winner: Eli Tomac, Honda



UNSTOPPABLE

Words and pics by Steve Cox, Hoppenworld.com



Just as in Supercross this year the outdoor championship – in the 450cc class, at least – has one guy with a stranglehold on it pretty early on. With James Stewart dropping out of Colorado with a hurt wrist (I still suspect, as I said on Twitter, that it's a scaphoid break), Ryan Dungey shot to the top of the points standings with his 1-1 score.

But Stewart returned at High Point. Which predictably didn't go well.

Stewart is incredibly tough, though. He put down the fastest single lap in practice – the second practice session – to qualify number one. The track was just starting to get rough, and he went out and put it to 'em. But it was obvious he wasn't the James Stewart we all know and admire in moto one, as he slowly worked his way forward from a so-so start to finish a solid, and very respectable, fifth place. The James Stewart we all know would've made it to the top three for sure and probably would've been challenging for the lead by the end of that moto.

But considering the pain he must be in with his wrist injury, a top-five was amazing. It was simultaneously disappointing, though, as Stewart doesn't race for top-fives. Ever. The guy always wants to try and win, no matter the circumstances. And considering how heroic his fifth-place finish was from moto one, it was predictable that he wouldn't make the call for



Stewart finds little relief from being able to enter the track



moto two. Why? Because what's the point? He wants to be racing for wins and championships, not fifth place. Fifth place simply doesn't make showing up to the races 'worth it' to a guy who has never, in his entire amateur and pro career, settled for anything less than a win unless he was absolutely forced to do so.

So, Stewart is out, and Dungey went 1-1 yet again. This is Ryan Dungey's championship to lose at this point, and it's all lining up very well for Roger De Coster and the Red Bull KTM squad to take down its first 450cc championship in the AMA.



Barcia gets one over on Baggett but the Kawasaki man keeps the red plate

There's talk that Stewart will be back after the break, as the race following High Point is Budds Creek (bummer to miss Stewart at that track, formerly referred to as "Bubba's Creek" and for good reason), and then there are two weekends off before the racing resumes. That could mean as much as four weeks to let his

wrist heal. But even if it does, (which if it's a scaphoid fracture is unlikely) it's unrealistic he'll be able to make a championship run at Ryan Dungey by that point. So he might just sit it out with nothing much to gain and a lot to lose heading into the 2013 championships. We'll see...

It took Ken Roczen just five Grands Prix before he tasted his first victory as a fifteen year old in 2009. The German will have to take that top step next week at Budds Creek if he wants the same distinction in the Nationals





In the injury-hit class it is Mike Alessi who is providing the strongest threat to Dungey so far





Yamaha received some much needed representation at the top end of the leaderboard with Davi Millsaps making a return to the field and winning a fifth position overall







AMA-MX CLASSIFICATION & CHAMPIONSHIP

AMA 450 OVERALL RESULT

Riders

1	Ryan Dungey, USA	KTM
2	Mike Alessi, USA	Suzuki
3	Jake Weimer, USA	Kawasaki
4	Andrew Short, USA	Honda
5	Davi Millsaps, USA	Yamaha

AMA 450 STANDINGS (AFTER 4 OF 12 ROUNDS)

Riders	Points
1 Ryan Dungey	186
2 Mike Alessi	144
3 Jake Weimer	141
4 Andrew Short	128
5 James Stewart	116

AMA 250 OVERALL RESULT

Riders

1	Eli Tomac, USA	Honda
2	Justin Barcia, USA	Honda
3	Ken Roczen, GER	KTM
4	Blake Baggett, USA	Kawasaki
5	Marvin Musquin, FRA	KTM

AMA 250 STANDINGS (AFTER 4 OF 12 ROUNDS)

Riders	Points
1 Blake Baggett	175
2 Justin Barcia	168
3 Eli Tomac	164
4 Ken Roczen	158
5 Marvin Musquin	117



REPLACING THE REPLACEMENTS

Before the AMA Nationals started up, teams were scrambling to fill seats throughout the AMA paddock. Sponsors want their bikes on the track and the more bikes the better. Pro Circuit added former 250cc outdoor champ Ivan Tedesco to their lineup, since the 30-year-old had a supercross-only deal with Hart & Huntington. And he has performed admirably (although starts would help). TwoTwo Motorsports added Ben Townley to ride in place of Chad Reed, but Townley dislocated his hip prior to even making it Stateside. Team Honda brought on former team member Tommy Hahn to race in place of Trey Canard, but he suffered

a broken clutch finger when roost hit his hand in Colorado, knocking him out of the racing likely until at least after the X Games break. Similarly, Monster Energy Kawasaki brought up Tyla Rattray from the Pro Circuit squad to race in place of Ryan Villopoto, but Rattray only lasted a few laps into the first moto of the year at Hangtown before he also suffered a broken finger from roost. In large part, the replacement racers have turned out to be a drain on resources instead of helping the teams keep racers on the track. But seriously, does anyone run hand-guards anymore?





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STEWART PARADOX...

By Steve Cox

James Stewart is used to being the guy to beat. To win, when he's on the line, you have to go through him. Historically, though, if he does lose, it's usually because he crashes, not necessarily because he was beat 'straight up' (whatever that means).

Prior to the 2012 season it's widely known that Stewart was toying with the idea of buying himself out of his Yamaha contract (Yamaha had first right of refusal on any deal Stewart could get with any other manufacturers) and racing Suzukis. He opted out of that after the sales pitch and attention he received from the Joe Gibbs Racing/Toyota Yamaha team.

However, some untimely crashes in supercross left his confidence (and his body) pretty beat up, and he finally made the switch away from Yamaha and to Suzuki for the 2012 Nationals. Rumor was that he was blaming the bulk of his crashes on the Yamaha YZ450F. He couldn't find a set-up that worked for him consistently since the bike changed a few years ago, and he has struggled pretty consistently ever since.

Switching to Suzuki looked like a genius move after the first two AMA Nationals of the year, as he won all four motos, even though he spent three of those with Ryan Dungey all over his rear tire for the duration of the races.

However, early in the first moto in Colorado, Stewart had another one of his now-customary get-offs. He blamed it on a media person who crossed the track on the backside of a jump. And if you see the video of the lap before this incident, and the video from his helmet-cam of the actual incident, you quickly realize that this person crossing the track had nothing to do with the crash. It's possible that this person crossing the track distracted Stewart momentarily, which led

to the accident. But you can see from his helmet cam that he was landing on the left side of the track anyway, and when the person came into view for Stewart, he was already 3/4 of the way across to the right side of the track. By the time Stewart landed, the person was at the banner on the opposite side of the track from where Stewart arrived. Stewart didn't have to adjust his lines or anything. He actually hit the same line the previous lap heading into the ruts. Stewart fell about 100 meters after where this person crossed.

The track invader definitely made a mistake but for Stewart to blame his crash on this person is just unrealistic. And his quick decision to blame the spill on this other person brings into question the validity of Stewart's dislike of the Yamaha as well. Is he just not able to admit when he messes up? This isn't an uncommon trait among top professional athletes and it's becoming apparent that perhaps Stewart is one of these guys. It's sometimes too much of a blow to a top athlete's confidence to admit that he just made a mistake: that it was all him.

The lap before his fall, he nearly went down in the same spot in the ruts, actually. The only difference the previous lap was that he stayed on the gas longer, which is exactly what you're supposed to do when you start to lean up against the inside of a rut too much.

He dropped out of the Colorado round with a wrist injury, losing the points lead to Ryan Dungey, but he was back on the track at High Point. No one has ever doubted his toughness or his tenacity, that's for sure.

But what has come into doubt is his ability to accept the fact that he makes too many big mistakes as things are right now and perhaps the Yamaha wasn't nearly as big of a part of that as he or others thought it was.



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NEXT PHASE...

TRIUMPH ARE PUSHING AHEAD AND WITH THEIR SPEED TRIPLE R FOR 2012 THEY COULD BE ONTO A REAL WINNER. HERE'S OTOR'S VERDICT...

By Roland Brown, photos by Alessio Barbanti, Paul Barshon and Patrick Gosling







Most motorcycle firms have a top-of-the-range sports model built for maximum performance. A fire-breathing flagship such as Ducati's Panigale, BMW's S1000RR or Honda's Fireblade, with a streamlined fairing, bum-in-the-air riding position, and a brief to be the quickest thing possible around any given racetrack.

Triumph do things a little differently and have probably been wise to opt out of the shrinking super-sports market in recent years. Instead the British firm's sportiest big bike has been the Speed Triple, a naked roadster with an addictive blend of simple good looks, shoulder-yanking performance and involving character.

With its distinctive, twin-headlight stare — re-styled to some people's dismay a year ago — it has become an iconic machine and Triumph's most important model.

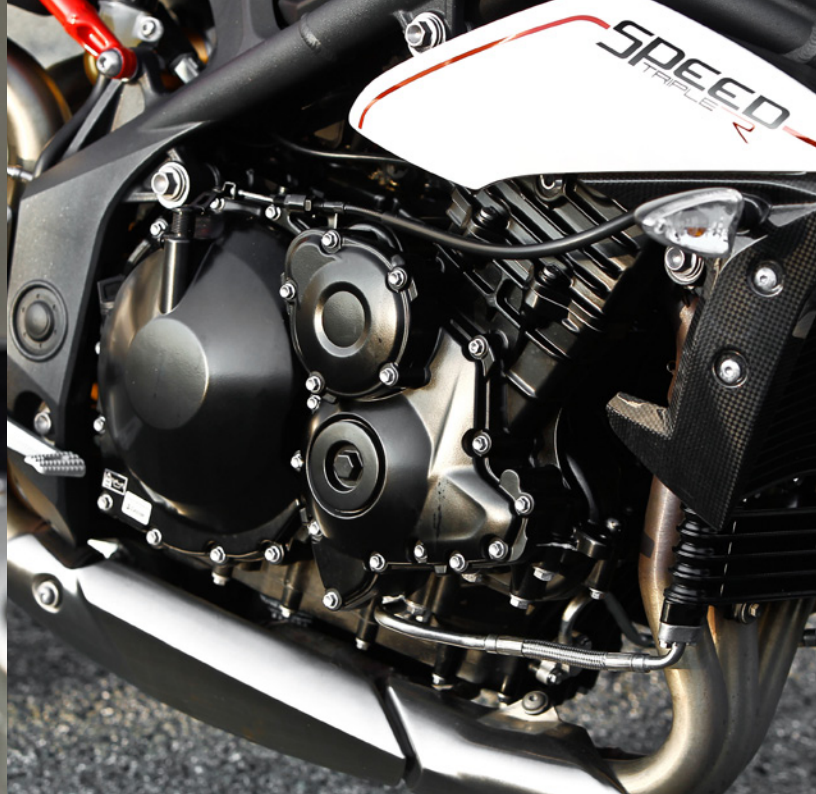
The Hinckley firm's development bods didn't have to look far for inspiration when they decided they needed a sportier model. Their own range already had a pair of three-cylinder middleweights, the Daytona 675 and the Street Triple, that have given rise to racier R versions with uprated chassis.

Both have sold as well as the standard models despite costing more. The only surprise about the Speed Triple R is that it didn't follow sooner.



Like the middleweight R-bikes, this new one keeps the standard model's engine — in the Speed Triple's case a 1050cc three-cylinder unit — and tubular aluminium frame. Its extra digit is earned with selection of suspension, wheel and brake parts that wouldn't look out of place on a grand prix racetrack. The Speed Triple R also gets a smattering of carbon-fibre: on its front mudguard, the front of the fuel tank and the radiator surround.

But it's those new chassis bits that are the real attraction, notably the Swedish made Öhlins suspension that replaces the standard bike's Japanese Showa units. Front brake calipers are Brembo's Monobloc design, machined from a single chunk of aluminium for maximum rigidity. In place of conventional cast aluminium wheels the R is treated to lightweight forged jobs from German specialist PVM.



To prove those parts wouldn't be out of place on a racetrack Triumph hired one: the excellent Jerez circuit. The location in southern Spain couldn't prevent a damp start but fortunately another of the Triple R's new features is a pair of soft-compound Pirelli Supercorsa SP tyres, whose grip was welcome on the slippery asphalt. And equally so when the circuit dried to allow serious cornering angles.

Triumph's big, torquey engine has always been a key Speed Triple feature and that remains true of the R version. Cracking open the throttle at anything above 3000rpm resulted in a satisfying boot in the back. At higher revs the smooth, ever strong three-cylinder unit helped make the bike quick and easy to ride. The previously notchy gearbox has been revised, to good effect although the change was still not quite as smooth as some.



“...And the cool thing about naked bikes is that on the road - where most get ridden - they feel exciting when you’re not going anywhere near so fast...”

TRIUMPH STREET TRIPLE R



With an unchanged maximum of 133bhp there was no shortage of straight-line stomp, and my neck muscles received a severe workout as the Triple howled towards its top speed of about 150mph. And the cool thing about naked bikes is that on the road - where most get ridden - they feel exciting when you're not going anywhere near that fast. On the track the Triumph occasionally ran out of revs exiting turns, hitting the limiter at 10,000rpm before I'd had time to change up. That simply wouldn't be an issue on the street.

More to the point, the Triple R's uprated chassis worked superbly, however hard it was used. The classy Öhlins suspension delivered flawless feedback and allowed the Triumph to carve up the smooth circuit, a lighter front wheel doubtless adding to the bike's agility. Stability was excellent, despite the forces being

put through the wide bars due to the wind-blown riding position. The front forks coped with the fierce yet controllable power of the Monobloc Brembos, whose ABS system will be a useful option on the road but was disabled at Jerez.

For such a capable 'track bike' the Triple R is reasonably practical, thanks to features including clear instruments, generous fuel range and comfortable dual-seat (long trips in winter would be a different matter...) Inevitably those fancy chassis components add to the price tag, bringing Triumph's naked flagship to the level of bikes such the Fireblade. The Speed Triple R can't match Triumph's smaller capacity R-models for value, but it has performance, character and appeal by the bucket-load. Who says a top sports bike has to have a fairing?







JAMES ELLISON AND CRT

FRONTING THE SECOND STRING:

JAMES ELLISON &
THE CRT CHALLENGE

By Gavin Emmett/Adam Wheeler, photos Gold & Goose

As the days count down to Silverstone British fans will no doubt be keeping a keen eye on the black and green number '35' Yamaha of Cal Crutchlow but a little further back in the field is the UK's very own Silver Dream Racer. The PBMUK RSV-4 carries 31 year old MotoGP™ veteran James Ellison; the Brit having clocked up 44 Grand Prix appearances on four different types of machinery and will now be aiming to give reason for cheer by winning the polemic CRT class as he did several weeks ago with an excellent 11th position on the Aprilia-powered bike at Le Mans. Here Ellison comments on his CRT adventure so far, his perception of the new category and his hopes on home soil...

On the CRT world...

My outlook on the CRT thing is that it's brilliant. I think that it's just one big step in the right direction of making the sport more exciting for the fans and giving other people a chance, like Moto2 people who might want to move up next year. With a bit of extra funding you can get into that class and as the rules come closer you'll see that gap getting closer and more people getting involved and it's still going to be the elite.



On the good it has done...

CRT opens up the championship up for a lot of people who wouldn't have got the chance in the past. It's given them a chance now to get into the frame of maybe doing well and getting something better in the future. Paul Bird and his seven-man team from Penrith; you would never have thought he had a chance of fighting it in a MotoGP™ race, and getting into the parc ferme area like we did in Le Mans.







From the depression of Portugal to the elation of France...

It got to the point where we hadn't had the help from Aprilia that we needed and it led to me pulling in at Estoril and I just lost it. I said 'we need to sit down and sort this out because there is something wrong with that bike and I can't fix it unless you guys help me'. So we sat down after the Estoril race and went through everything with Aprilia and we could see where my bike was different to Randy's (De Puniet). Massively different with the electronics side. So they brought those settings to Le Mans and put them onto the bike and they seemed to work without the chattering problem. So I went from one of the lowest points of my life to then going to France and it was brilliant to be able to come up with something like that. I was made-up with it and of course Paul and the team too. I could understand Paul being angry before; it's his team and he's put the money in and wants results but we are all trying.

On working on the set-up of a prototype...

The problem has been chattering opening the gas; it wasn't like 'normal' chatter where you let the brakes off and the tyre vibrates. You let the brake off and opened the throttle and the whole bike is like 'pa-pa-pa-pa'. Once we got that sorted out it seemed like we made the step forward really. Mick (Shanley) and Phil (Borley) are so clever, if they had an open book to everything in those electronics they'd be able to find it out but the Aprilia guys are looking after four bikes and they haven't got time to be going through mine with a fine-toothed comb trying to find the little glitch or whatever's causing it. That was the only disappointing thing; that I felt I wasn't getting help from the people I should have been getting it from. I felt also that I was letting the guys down because I was coming in with all these excuses. I said, 'If I could sit you on the back of the bike and show you what it feels like, then you'd understand why I'm coming in with these problems'. It's nothing to do with me riding it differently or riding it wrong or riding it like a superbike.



***“...I think they’ve done the right thing,
you could have had about 12 riders
left in MotoGP™! ...”***





On adjusting back to MotoGP and his rivals...

There are still some things I need to learn. I know I'm braking slightly differently to the other guys, or to Randy at least, but it's minimal. We grab the brake at the same time, we hold it for the same pressure, but when we get to a corner I start to release mine slightly earlier than him, carrying three or four km/h faster corner speed. So then I'm unable to get on the gas until maybe three-tenths later than him and at the end of the straight that adds up to six kilometres per hour. When we overlaid the graphs between mine and Randy's data that was the only difference.

On Silverstone...

You try your hardest at every circuit - and your mental state and physical state are the same - but at the home round you can't help but have that extra little bit of fire and think that you going to do it. I don't want Le Mans to be a one-off. I can't wait honestly, it should be good. Silverstone is fast and there's going to be a race within a race. Randy's going to be the benchmark, he is strong here and had a front-row start. He's shown what he can do at the circuit. The aim really is to be with him. That's obviously the plan at every round.

On the reaction to CRT and the future...

For Stoner and all the boys, the aliens, you're never going to touch them but a lot of it is down to machinery too. Randy has proved that. So all the organisers need to do is close the machinery gap because you have 25 to 30 riders who could potentially fight for the front row. The rules mean we're separate at the minute but it's the starting point; it's the first step towards getting back to a decent championship again. It's the first step to getting 25, maybe even 30 riders fighting competitively. We are just in the first year of this. You'll look back in a few years time and remember the four-second gaps but that will close. Maybe they can put a rev limit on the full MotoGP™ bikes or a weight limit or whatever, something to bring the gap a bit closer.

Where Ellison was one of the original CRT pioneer riders...

I rode the WCM in the past and we would lose a second and a half on each straight at Sepang. Peter Clifford had produced a CRT bike but there was nobody else in the same situation so it didn't show how good it actually was and how good the team was. I've said in the past that the best years I've had were with WCM and the bike was awesome. We felt we could be competitive around some circuits like Sachsenring where I was eighth quickest through the first split there because it was just corners.



CYCLING FOR SUPERSIC

The official renaming of Misano this weekend was a nice tribute to Marco Simoncelli and it promises to be an emotional return to his home circuit for the MotoGP world in September.

Along with a select of other paddock regulars and friends I will be part of a group aiming to make our own special tribute to Marco during the week of the race, by cycling from Donington Park to Misano.

The ride - which is being organised by former 125cc MX World Champion and avid OTOR reader Jamie Dobb and his good friend Jimmy Button, the former AMA SX star - will commence with a lap of the East Midlands circuit shortly before the British Superbike round there on 9th September.

Full details of the route are yet to be revealed but the plan is to finish just four days later on

the eve of the San Marino Grand Prix amidst the company of a host of MotoGP paddock people and riders who will join a twelve-man team, including none other than 1993 500cc World Champion Kevin Schwantz, on the final 10km stretch from Simoncelli's home town of Coriano to the circuit now named in his honour.

The charities set to benefit from the sponsored ride are:

<http://www.marcosimoncellifondazione.it>

<http://www.road2recovery.com>

<http://www.rainbows.co.uk>

<http://www.sparks.org.uk>

<http://www.chect.org.uk/cms>

<http://www.themoreproject.org>

If you or your business can help in any way with sponsorship or support, please contact jdobb@wmglc.com (MR)





LORENZO STAYS BLUE FOR TWO

Yamaha's press release about Jorge Lorenzo arrived just before OTOR was closing up for this issue and the news that the Spaniard is tied to the M1 for another two years is a relief to one Japanese corner of the paddock while the confirmation of Lorenzo's saddle will now start the shuffling of pieces around the MotoGP class.

That the 2010 champion is staying blue is no big surprise but the timing of the announcement was a bit sooner than expected. One has to wonder if Lorenzo will buy Casey Stoner a new fishing rod as the Australian's retirement declaration automatically pushed the Mallorcan into the position of 'top dog' and therefore more bargaining power when it came to salary demands. Yamaha were either able to meet an increased figure quite quickly or the amount was not so extortionate to trouble contract talks that allegedly had begun around the start of the

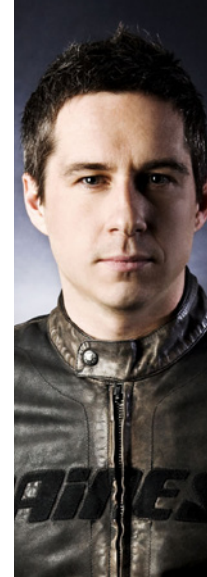
season.

Lorenzo and the factory team had a tough year in 2011 but it seems the 1000cc M1 is now in a position of returning to the halcyon days at the end of the last decade where the blue and white machine was the superior motorcycle. The experience of senior management at Yamaha has helped in this contract situation. Lorenzo is now free of possible distractions and able to push ahead with his plight for 2012 title glory in an imminent busy spell of five races in seven weeks.

All eyes will now turn on the second bike in the separated pit box with Ben Spies yet to show he has the capacity to step-up a level or at least equal the intensity of potential that is burning away with the likes of Crutchlow and Dovizioso. (AW)

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DOVI SHOWS REAL VALUE

By Matthew Roberts

It was with typical understated joy that Andrea Dovizioso stepped up to the podium for the seventeenth time in his MotoGP career in Barcelona and his sensational ride to third place provided a timely reminder to factory team bosses planning for the 2013 post-Stoner shake-up that he remains one of the true class acts in the field.

As Repsol Honda scaled back to two riders at the end of last season Dovizioso was in some ways unfortunate to be left out of the factory reckoning but HRC's loss was to the immediate gain of Yamaha, who instantly benefitted from his vast experience and famously concise feedback from the very first test at Valencia. In fact, much of the credit for the way Yamaha have closed the gap to Honda - and perhaps even overtaken them with the new 1000cc YZR-M1 - over the winter must surely be attributed to Dovizioso's input.

Yamaha will be well aware of what 58 GP podiums bring to the table...

Now, with Ben Spies desperately struggling for form and Jorge Lorenzo with a title to think about, Dovizioso's contribution to the machine's ongoing development will be vital. Indeed, in the post-race test at Barcelona he was entrusted with a new engine and electronics package

which he used to set the fastest time of the day, some seven tenths quicker than Jorge Lorenzo's best effort in Sunday's race. He backed that up with an impressive display at Aragon later in the week, assessing a revised engine spec and giving additional feedback to Yamaha's engineers.

The key benefit of the new engine, according to Dovi, was not in its performance over a single fast lap but more in terms of tyre management, which will be important as Bridgestone prepare for some gruelling races at places like Mugello, Laguna Seca and Indianapolis.

It makes you wonder if HRC are regretting not making more of an effort to keep the former 125cc World Champion on one of their bikes for a tenth season, having left Fausto Gresini's satellite team to pick up Alvaro Bautista (surely Gresini's main sponsor San Carlo would have preferred an Italian rider). With the early season hype around Cal Crutchlow's sparkling start to his second campaign at the top level, Stefan Bradl's impressive adaptation in his rookie season and an uncertain future for Valentino Rossi at Ducati, the unassuming Dovizioso is often overlooked in the speculation surrounding the factory rides.

However, the main men at Yamaha are well aware of what 58 Grand Prix podiums brings to the table and the bosses at Honda will be now starting to understand what it is they have lost. On current form, the Italian's signature could be the most coveted of the lot.



BACKPAGE

2012 Monster Energy girls
By Juan Pablo Acevedo
www.mx1onboard.com







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